

Harriet Martineau to W.L. Garrison.

See Life of W.L.G., 4: 120.

ms. A. 1.2. v. 33 p 77a

I have been thinking of you with strong sympathy for a long time past. Indeed, as you know, I always did; but I mean particularly since your precious wife's illness, & since the peculiar trial, (so strange, considering the persons!) of your being misunderstood & unkindly treated by old comrades & disciples who sh^d have distrusted their own judgment rather than doubt you. With your own countrymen & countrywomen who have done you wrong, made mistakes I have no immediate concerns but I think it may be well to say a word or two about two or three people here. You will see that what I say of them is for your own informa-

tion, & given as a personal explanation
to you. If there was any way in which
I c^d publicly express my own views
in the matter, I sh^d be very glad to
bear my testimony to what seems to
me our entire agreement on the question
of Mr Lincoln's character, deserts, &
claim to reelection; & to express my
heartly admiration of the magnanimity
of your conduct, as well as of the
justness & clearness of your views
in the most critical hour of the
history of your Republic. All who
know me here know what I think,
& if it c^d be of any use (which I
hardly suppose) its being understood
on your side of the water, I sh^d be
glad that it was known.

Professor Cairnes called here
ten days ago. I seldom or never see
any visitor now (being too ill) except

hear neighbours & friends: but I ^{could}
not send away that stranger-friend
(for we had never met) without a word,
& I rejoice that he came. He had been
travelling, & had not seen the "Liberator"
containing Mr Newman's letter. He
took it away with him; & when he
brought it back next day, he expressed
strong surprise, - well as he knows
Mr Newman, - at the absurdity, & regret
at the tone of that letter. He observed
(you will see that this was private
conversation) that ^{there} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~no~~ ^{no} element
of statesmanship in the mind of the
writer of such an effusion; & he
pointed out particularly the passage
about its being Mr Lincoln's duty, -
in a certain case - to abdicate! He
told me that some months ago, Mr
Newman bitterly scolded him, in
company, for not making allowance
enough for constitutional ~~diff~~ restrictions

& prescriptions in the case of our
own government; & now he w^d have
the Chief Magistrate of your Republic
abdicate instead of discharging his
function! Prof^r Cairnes & I were
anxious each to know what the other
thought of W^r Lincoln, & of your
course; & it was pleasant to find
how entirely we agreed.

It strikes me that you may be
more or less surprised that we have
been so quiet on the subject of
Wendell Phillips & his clique. My
own judgment is in favour of taking
no notice whatever, in any public
way, of the split among the old
abolitionists: & my reasons are these.

The Abolitionists are lost sight
of here in the overwhelming interest
of ^{our} present ^{national} affairs. I believe that
they are revered as having brought

about the National repentance ²/₇
amendment; & that they are merged
in the nation, in people's view, &
taken leave of with congratulations
on the nobleness first, & next on the
success, of their work. It w^d do great
mischiefs, in our (your friends') opinion,
to see ~~you~~ ^{the abolitionists} before the world as break-
ing asunder & wrangling, now when
~~your~~ ^{their} exceptional work is done; & it
seems to be due to your own
dignified quietness & forbearance
to keep your name clear from all
associations with strife & insults, if
it can be done. There is no occasion
to tell people here that ~~you~~ have
been insulted by anybody but slave-
holders & copperheads. — Nobody but
Mr Newman's own friends (& they are
very few) will hear of his letter to

yours - a they will see your answer.
We judge it best to avow on all
reasonable occasions our wish for
Mr. Lincoln's re-election, & our respect
for the patriotism & wisdom of abo-
litionists who are forbearing with
his human frailties, for the sake
of the national welfare."

I need scarcely add that Wendell
Phillips's crazy denunciations of
"England" deprive him of all public
influence here. People don't care a
straw what a passionate man says
of "England"; but of course any move-
ment which is led by him is simply
set aside as of no importance.

This leads me to another
reason for ignoring the quarrel.
Mr. Newman has no weight here.

The private reason is that the
Newmans are supposed (see the case
of the elder brother) to be not quite
sound in brain. However this may be,
Mr. Newman's eccentricities have created
a void round him; & his enormous
vanity impels him into incessant
controversy, - in which society now
refuses to gratify him. He likes
to create a sensation by the strong
& odd things he says, & by the
abuse he draws on himself: & he
admits to his friends that he by no
means dislikes being "persecuted",
as he calls it. Throughout this American
war he has been so violent & obtrusive,
& so insulting to everybody who did
not follow his lead, that his oldest
& most patient friends, & the
best friends of the North, have,

to my knowledge, left off inviting
him to meet other guests, because
he kept them on thorns, & spoiled every
body's pleasure. Conway may be
a pet among the intemperate &
ill-informed clique of whom the P.A.
Taylors are the representatives; but his
ignorance, forwardness, & want of sense,
& the ludicrous mistakes he makes in
his letters home about people & affairs
in London prevent his being of any
importance. - Cairnes, Forster, John Mill
& that sort of men have great weight;
& the others are not worthy of notice.
Observe the influence of W. E. Forster
in parliament, in contrast with the in-
chicous & doleful insignificance of
P.A. Taylor; & you will see what I mean.
Goldwin Smith is another real power.
I say as much as circumstances permit
in honour of Mr Lincoln in "Daily News";
& I shall try my best to work in that

to be kept readable direct - it will only damage